Psychology of Religion

Prof. Daniela Villani

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to introduce students to the basic concepts, the main theories, and some of the most important research issues in the field of psychology of religion. The topics will be analysed with reference to the present debate and by highlighting what psychology of religion can offer from the applicative/practical point of view. At the end of the course, students will have acquired a basic knowledge of the topics addressed in the psychology of religion, the methods used in this sector, and the most relevant concepts and constructs that have been developed.

The student will also be able to apply what they have learned to the psychological analysis of religious beliefs, experiences and practices and to reflect critically.

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course intends to address the following issues relating to the psychology of religion: fundamental issues, theoretical approaches and historical development; methods for the evaluation of religiosity; the cognitive mechanisms and personal epistemologies associated with the representation of the supernatural; religiosity in the various phases of the life cycle; the relationship between religion and attachment and the contribution of the psychoanalytic perspective; the psychological aspects of religious practices; the relationship between religiosity and spirituality; religiosity: Spiritulity and specific features and implications for the individual's health and well-being.

***READING LIST***

F. Watts, *Psicologia della Religione e della Spiritualità. Aspetti teorici e applicativi*. Vita e Pensiero, Milano, 2022

Inoltre, la bibliografia prevede lo studio parziale di un testo a scelta tra i seguenti:

G. Rossi e Aletti, M. (a cura di), *Psicologia della religione e teoria dell’attaccamento,* Aracne Editrice, Roma, 2009. (chapters 1, 2, 3, 7, 8)

Bellantoni, D. *Religione, spiritualità e senso della vita. La dimensione trascendente come fattore di promozione dell’umano.* Franco Angeli, Milano, 2019 (from chapter 1 to chapter 5)

Bignardi, P. e Simeone, D. (edited by), *(D)Io allo specchio. Giovani e ricerca spirituale*. Vita e Pensiero, Milano, 2022 (from chapter 1 to chapter 5)

The full set of materials used during lectures and made available to students on the Blackboard platform form an integral part of the course.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lessons will include presentations of course topics, analysis of recent research, as well as the discussion of topics being studied. There will be presentations by experts in the field.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

An oral exam in the form of an interview, which will seek to ascertain the student's learning and personal re-working of the main course contents, as well as their ability to draw connections between the course contents and real-life situations. Students will be assessed on the relevance of their answers, their use of a correct specialised vocabulary, the reasoned and coherent structuring of their discourse, and their ability to create links and critically reinterpret the topics covered.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

The course requires prior knowledge of the basic notions, concepts, theories and methodologies of psychology.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.